GERMANY THE NEXT REPUBLIC?

"I was not in Germany very long until I was impressed by the remarkable control the Government had on public opinion by censorship of the press. People believe, without exception, everything they read in the newspapers."

BY CARL W. ACKERMAN

Ackerman Soon Found That a Reporter Could Telegraph Not What He Observed and Heard, but What the Censors Desired American Readers to Hear and Know About Germany. This Was Their Greatest Mistake

His Description of German Joy Over the Lusitania Horror Passed by the Military Authorities but Suppressed by the Foreign Office. Inconsistency in Regard to Munitions Shown by Actions of Germans Themselves

A FEW weeks before I arrived in Berlin the Germans were excited over the shipment of arms and ammunition from the United States to the Allies, but by the time I was in Berlin the situation seemed to have changed. On April 4 I telegraphed the following dispatch, which appeared in the Evening Sun, New York:

The spirit of animosity toward Americans which swept Germany a few weeks ago seems to have disappeared. The 1400 Americans in Berlin and those in the smaller cities of Germany have little cause to complain of discourteous treatment. Americans just arriving in Berlin in particular comment upon the friendliness of their reception. The Germans have been especially courteous, they declare, on learning of their nationality. Feeling against the United States for permitting arms to be shipped to the Allies still exists, but I have not found this feeling extensive among the Germans. Two American doctors, studying in German clinics, declare that the wounded soldiers always talk about "Amerikanische keugel" (American bullets), but it is my observation that the persons most outspoken against the sale of ammunition to the Allies by American manufacturers are the American residents of Berlin.

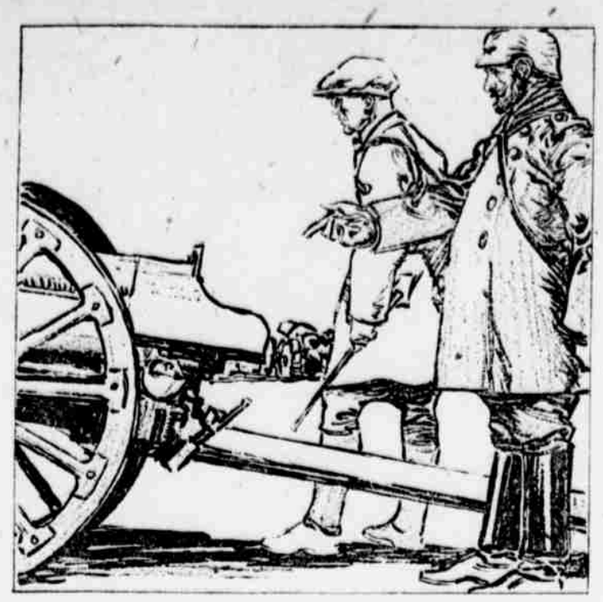
Two weeks later the situation had changed considerably. On the twenty-fourth I telegraphed: "Despite the bitter criticism of the United States by German newspapers for refusing to end the traffic in munitions, it is semiofficially explained that this does not represent the real views of the German Government. The censor has been instructed to permit the newspapers to express themselves frankly on this subject and on Secretary Bryan's reply to the Von Bernstorff note, but it has been emphasized that their views reflect popular opinion and the editorial side of the matter and not the Government.

"The Lokal Anzeiger, following up its attack of yesterday, today says:

"'The answer of the United States is no surprise to Germany, and naturally it fails to convince Germany that a flourishing trade in munitions of war is in accord with strict neutrality. The German argument was based upon the practice of international law, but the American reply was based upon the commercial advantages enjoyed by the ammunition shippers.'"

April 24 was Von Tirpitz day. It was the anniversary of the entrance of the Grand Admiral in the German navy fifty years before and the eighteenth anniversary of his debut in the Cabinet, a record for a German Minister of Marine. There was tremendous rejoicing throughout the country, and the Admiral, who spent his Prussian birthday at the Navy Department, was overwhelmed with congratulations. Headed by the Kaiser, telegrams came from every official in Germany. The press paid high tribute to his blockade, declaring that it was due to him alone that England was so terror-stricken by submarines.

I was not in Germany very long until I was impressed by the remarkable control the Government had on public opinion by censorship of the press. People believe, without exception, everything they read in the newspapers. And I soon discovered that the censor was so accustomed to dealing with German editors that he applied the same standards to the foreign correspondents. **A reporter could telegraph not what he observed and heard, but what the censors desired American readers to hear and know about Germany.**



"At Vilna I saw 400 machine guns and 1300 pieces of heavy artillery which were captured from the enemy. The officers said they were made in America."

I was in St. Quentin, France (which the Germans on their 1917 withdrawal set on fire), at the headquarters of General von Below when news came May 8 that the Lusitania was torpedoed. I read the bulletins as they arrived. I heard the comments of the Germans who were waging war in an enemy country. I listened as they spoke of the loss of American and other women and children. I was amazed when I heard them say that a woman had no more right on the Lusitania than she would have on an ammunition wagon on the Somme. The day before I was in the first-line trenches on the German front, which crossed the road running from Peronne to Albert. At that time this battlefield, which a year and a half later was destined to be the scene of the greatest slaughter in history, was as quiet and beautiful as this picturesque country of northern France was in peace times. Only a few trenches and barbed-wire entanglements marred the scene.

On May 9 I left St. Quentin for Brussels. Here I was permitted by the German Government to send a dispatch reflecting the views of the German army in France about the sinking of the Lusitania. I wrote what I thought was a fair article. I told how the bulletin was posted in front of the Hotel de Ville; how the officers and soldiers marching to and away from the front stopped, read, smiled and congratulated each other because the navy was at last helping the army "win the war." There were no expressions of regret over the loss of life. These officers and soldiers had seen so many dead, soldiers and civilians, men and women, in Belgium and France that neither death nor murder shocked them.

The telegram was approved by the military censor and forwarded to Berlin. I stayed in Belgium two days longer, went to Louvain and Liege and reached Berlin May 12. The next day I learned at the Foreign Office that my dispatch was stopped because it conflicted with the opinions which the German Government was sending officially by wireless to Washington and to the American newspapers. I felt that this was unfair, but I was subject to the censorship and had no appeal.

I did not forget this incident, because it showed a striking difference of opinion between the army, which was fighting for Germany, and the Foreign Office, which was explaining and excusing what the army and navy did. The army always justified the events in Belgium, but the Foreign Office did not. And this was the first incident which made me feel that even in Germany, which was supposed to be united, there were differences of opinion.

In September, 1915, while the German army was moving against Russia like a surging sea, I was invited to go to the front near Vilna. During the intervening months I had observed and recorded as much as possible the growing indignation in Germany because the United States permitted the shipment of arms and ammunition to the Allies. In June I had had an interview with Secretary of State von Jagow, in which he protested against the attitude of the United States Government and said that America was not acting as neutral as Germany did during the Spanish-American War. He cited page 68 of Andrew D. White's book, in which Ambassador White said he persuaded Germany not to permit a German ship laden with ammunition and consigned for Spain to sail. I thought that if Germany had adopted such an attitude toward America, in justice to Germany Washington should adopt the same position. After Von Jagow gave me the facts in possession of the Foreign Office and after he had loaned me Mr. White's book, I looked up the data. I found, to my astonishment, that Mr. White reported to the State Department that a ship of ammunition sailed from Hamburg and that he had not protested, although the naval attache had requested him to do so. The statements of Von Jagow and Mr. White in his autobiography did not agree with the facts. Germany did send ammunition to Spain, but Wilhelmstrasse was using Mr. White's book as proof that the Krupp interests did not supply our enemy in 1898.

The latter part of September I entered Kovno, the important Russian fortress, eight days after the army captured it. I was escorted, together with other foreign correspondents, from one fort to another and shown what the forty-two-centimeter guns had destroyed. I saw 400 machine guns which were captured and 1300 pieces of heavy artillery. The night before, at a dinner party, the officers had argued against the United States because of the shipment of supplies to Russia. They said that if the United States had not aided Russia that country would not have been able to resist the invaders. I did not know the facts, but I accepted their statements. **When I was shown the machine guns, I examined them and discovered that every one of the 400 was made at Essen or Magdeburg, Germany. Of the 1300 pieces of artillery, every cannon was made in Germany except a few English ship guns. Kovno was fortified by German artillery, not American.**

A few days later I entered Vilna; this time I was moving with the advance column. At dinner that night with General von Weber, the commander of the city, the subject of American arms and ammunition was again brought up. The General said they had captured from the Russians an American machine gun. He added that they were bringing it in from Smorgon to show the Americans. When it reached us the stamp, written in English, showed that it was manufactured by Vickers, Ltd., England. Being unable to read English, the officer who reported the capture thought the gun was made in the United States.

In Rumania last December I followed General von Falkenhayn's armies to the forts of Bucharest. On Thanksgiving Day I crossed by automobile the Schurduck Pass. The Rumanians had defended, or attempted to defend, this road by mounting armored guns on the crest of one of the mountain ranges in the Transylvania Alps. I examined a whole position here and found all turrets made in Germany.

I did not doubt that the shipment of arms and ammunition to the Allies had been a great aid to them. (I was told in Paris, later, on my way to the United States, that if it had not been for the American ammunition factories France would have been defeated long ago.)

But when Germany argued that the United States was not neutral in permitting these shipments to leave American ports, Germany was forgetting what her own arms and munition factories had done for Germany's enemies. When the Krupp works sold Russia the defenses for Kovno, the German Government knew these weapons would be used against Germany some day, because no nation except Germany could attack Russia by way of that city. When Krupps sold war supplies to Rumania, the German Government knew that if Rumania joined the Allies these supplies would be used against German soldiers. But the Government was careful not to report these facts in German newspapers. And, although Secretary of State von Jagow acknowledged to Ambassador Gerard that there was nothing in international law to justify a change in Washington's position, Von Jagow's statements were not permitted to be published in Germany.

To understand Germany's resentment over Mr. Wilson's interference with the submarine warfare, three things must be taken into consideration:

First. The Allies' charge that all Germans are "Huns and Barbarians."

Przemysl gefallen!

Telegraphische Meldung.

Wien, 3. Juni.

Amtlich wird verlautbart:

Seit heute 3 Uhr 30 Minuten vormittags ist Przemysl wieder in unserem Besitz.

Der Stellvertreter des Chefs des Generalstabes von Hoefer, Feldmarschalleutnant.

Alle Sonder-Ausgaben des Berliner Lokal-Anzeigers werden nach wie vor in beliebiger Anzahl unentgeltlich und in unseren sämtlichen Geschäftsstellen an jedermann verabfolgt.

[A Berlin "Extra"]

Second. The battle of the Marne and the shipment of arms and ammunition from the United States.

Third. The intrigue and widening breach between the army and navy and the Foreign Office.

One weapon the Allies used against Germany, which was more effective than all others, was the press. When the English and French indicted the Germans as "Barbarians and Huns," as "pirate" and "uncivilized" Europeans, it cut the Germans to the quick; it affected men and women so terribly that Germans feared them attacks more than they did the combined military might of their enemies. This is readily understood when one realizes that before the war the thing the Germans prided themselves on was their commerce and their civilization—their Kultur. Before the war the world was told by every German what the nation had done for the poor, what strides the scientists had made in research work and what progress the business men had made in extending their commerce at the expense of competitors.

While some Government officials foresaw the disaster which would come to Germany if this national vanity was paraded before the whole world, their advice and counsel were ignored. Count General Kiliani, the chief German official in Australia before the war, told me he had reported repeatedly to the Foreign Office that German business men were injuring their own opportunities by bragging so much of what they had done and what they would do. He said if it continued the whole world would be leagued against Germany; that public opinion would be so strong against German goods that they would lose their markets. Germany made the whole world fear her commercial might by this foolish bragging.

So when the war broke out and Germans were attacked for being uncivilized in Belgium, for breaking treaties and for disregarding the opinion of the world, it was but natural that German vanity should resent it. Germans feared nothing but God and public opinion. They had such exalted faith in their army they believed they could gain by might what they had lost in prestige throughout the world. **This is one of the reasons the German people arose like one man when war was declared. They wished and were ready to show the world that they were the greatest people ever created.**

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

REMARKABLE PHOTOGRAPH OF A GAS ATTACK AGAINST THE GERMAN LINES IN FRANCE

Photo from Kadel & Herbert.

AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER HOVERING OVER THE BATTLEFIELD TOOK THIS PICTURE
All of which attests to the practicability and great military value of airplane photography, another of the arms Uncle Sam will have a hand in in the war. The attacking troops in the photograph are poilus, who creep from shell hole to shell hole behind the gas screen.

Photo from Underwood & Underwood.

ITALIANS CARRY WOUNDED DOWN FROM MOUNTAIN TOP
Very tenderly the stretcher bearers in the photograph are making their way down the side of Mount San Gabriele. The barrels, also shown, contain water which is forced up the mountain to General Cadorna's attacking forces.